

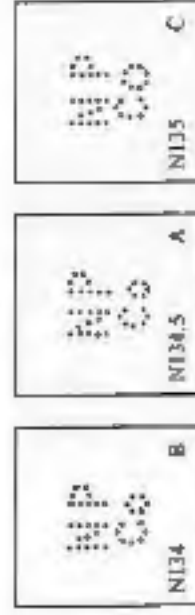
National Publishing Company N134 - A Cover Increasing Catalog Dates of Use

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The National Publishing Company cover shown below presents a quandary.



Consider that there are three NP/Co perfins listed in John Randall's *Catalog of United States Perfins*: N134, N134.5, and N135. Correctly identifying this perfin can be rewarding. N134 is rated B, N134.5 is rated A, and N135 is rated C.



While sitting at a dealer's table checking covers, I quickly categorized the illustrated cover as N135 because the catalog lists usage as 1925-33 for that perfin (whereas N134 is listed as being used in 1914-1917 and 1917 is the only year of usage listed for N134.5). The C rated cover was still of

interest to me, so I put it in my "buy" pile and started checking additional material.

Upon getting ready to mount the cover and write up my find, a curious thing occurred. I noticed that the letter "o" in the perfin was smaller than that illustrated in the catalog for N135. This plus the user ID in the US Catalog ruled out the C rated perfin. Suddenly, a dilemma -- did I have the A or B rated perfin? Since the stamp is on cover, it is not possible to compare it by laying the stamp over the catalog illustration. But the height of some letters differs between the two remaining patterns.



The letters "NP" in pattern N134 are 5 1/2 mm high, while in pattern N134.5 these letters are 6 mm. In addition, the letter "o" also differs by 1/2 mm. Use of a mm scale quickly confirmed that I had the B rated pattern N134.

Since the postmark on this cover is 1927, I believe that the usage data for the pattern (N134) needs to be expanded by ten years.